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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-9 (Canceled).

10. (Currently amended) : A method of amplifying optical signals, comprising:
- transmitting a first optical signal from a first bidirectional port of a first coupler to a first unidirectional port of a second coupler connected to the first coupler by a delay element;
  - transmitting the first optical signal from the first unidirectional port through an amplifier to a second unidirectional port of the second coupler; and
  - transmitting the first optical signal from the second unidirectional port to a second bidirectional port of the first coupler.

Claims 11-12. (Canceled).

13. (Currently amended) : The method of Claim 10, further comprising:
- transmitting a second optical signal from a second bidirectional port of the first coupler to the first unidirectional port;
  - transmitting ~~[[a]]~~ the second optical signal from the first unidirectional port through the amplifier to the second unidirectional port; and
  - transmitting the second optical signal from the second unidirectional port to the first bidirectional port.
14. (Previously presented) : The method of Claim 10, wherein the first optical signal is at a first wavelength.
15. (Previously presented) : The method of Claim 13, wherein the second optical signal is at a second wavelength.
16. (Currently amended) : A method of amplifying optical signals, comprising:

- transmitting a first optical signal from at least one of first and second bidirectional ports of a first coupler to a first unidirectional port of a second coupler connected to the first coupler by a delay element;
- transmitting the first optical signal from the first unidirectional port through an amplifier to a second unidirectional port of the second coupler; and

transmitting the first optical signal from the second unidirectional port to the at least one of first and second bidirectional ports.

Claims 17-18. (Canceled).

19. (Currently amended) : The method of Claim 16, further comprising:

transmitting a second optical signal from at least one of the first and second bidirectional ports to the first unidirectional port;

transmitting ~~[[a]]~~ the second optical signal from the first unidirectional port through the amplifier to the second unidirectional port; and

transmitting the second optical signal from the second unidirectional port to at least one of the first and second bidirectional ports.

20. (Previously presented) : The method of Claim 16, wherein the first optical signal is at a first wavelength.

21. (Previously presented) : The method of Claim 19, wherein the second optical signal is at a second wavelength.

22-24. (Canceled).

25. (Currently amended) : An optical router, comprising:

a first bidirectional port coupled to a first unidirectional port;

a delay element coupled to the first bidirectional port and the first unidirectional port;

an amplifier coupled to the first unidirectional port and a second unidirectional port; and

a second bidirectional port coupled to the second unidirectional port.

26. (Canceled).

27. (Previously presented) : The optical router of Claim 25, further comprising:

a first optical coupler coupled to the first bidirectional port and the second bidirectional port; and

a second optical coupler coupled to the first unidirectional port and the second unidirectional port.

28. (Previously presented) : The optical router of Claim 25, wherein the amplifier is a unidirectional amplifier.

29. (Canceled).

30. (New) : The optical router of Claim 10, wherein the delay element comprises at least one pair of electrodes.

31. (New) : The optical router of Claim 10, wherein the first and second couplers are 3 dB couplers.

32. (New) : The optical router of Claim 10, wherein the delay element is a difference in distance  $\Delta L$  indicating a real MZI difference between the first and second couplers.

33. (New) : The optical router of Claim 16, wherein the delay element comprises at least one pair of electrodes.

34. (New) : The optical router of Claim 16, wherein the first and second couplers are 3 dB couplers.

35. (New) : The optical router of Claim 16, wherein the delay element is a difference in distance  $\Delta L$  indicating a real MZI difference between the first and second couplers.

36. (New) : The optical router of Claim 25, wherein the delay element comprises at least one pair of electrodes.

37. (New) : The optical router of Claim 27, wherein the first and second optical couplers are 3 dB couplers.

38. (New) : The optical router of Claim 25, wherein the delay element is a difference in distance  $\Delta L$  indicating a real MZI difference between the first and second optical couplers.